425 f. Local organization and land transfers

(1) Land use. The use of land is necessary in two senses to validate a land claim among these Orokaiva. Usage is an important factor in determining the extent to which land is identified with the component units of the group which claims to hold land (cf. Williams 1928:125 and Plant 1951: Appendix 2).

425 184 Four factors have produced a closer identification between a household and the patrimonial land it cultivates than in some other Orokaiva areas: first, the frequency with which an adopted member retains and transmits to his own descendants land which he acquired from his natal group; second, the limited supply of land; third, continual use by people of the lineage land used by and inherited from their fathers, in that no special access to land of other lineages of the clan branch is accorded to them simply as a group of co-resident agnates; and fourth, a fertile soil which allows a short fallow cycle after single plantings of a predominant soil-exhausting crop.

613 428 [848] It has been common practice for distinct genealogical branches within the lineage to exercise continuous and exclusive rights to separate areas of lineage land. The small group within which these prescriptive rights are exercised and transmitted does not easily endure demographic changes and if there are no surviving male members, the rights it exercised may in certain circumstances devolve on a female member, for instance, and subsequently to her son, even if he is illegitimate, or perhaps a claim of a relatively close agnate will be overridden in favour of a distant clansman, with or without other cognatic ties to the group. When these rights are transmitted outside the direct male line, residence and land use are important as factors which influence the definition of the rights of the beneficiary vis-a-vis surviving members of the wider patrilineal group. As noted above the scope of the authority of members of the wider group in questions of land tends to have been limited by the frequent independent movement of the smaller units.

425 [606] [614] Our descriptions of the kinship composition of the village and neighbourhood and of the social elements of land use indicate that it is common to find men living and gardening in the same village or neighbourhood as their mother's or wife's kin and that the relationship with these people in certain cases overlays some patrilineal affiliation. Individual ties of clanship too are sometimes given new significance when reinforced by co-residence and exchanges of gardening rights. These patterns, we suggest, are correlated with repeated instances of transfers of prescriptive land rights from the small effective landholding group to kinsfolk of other lineages or clans.

man and both are now aged residents of Inonda. Having no other source of land rights they became accepted as primary (but perhaps less privileged) members of their adoptive father's lineage and sub-clan and were given rights to some of his land. These are still held. One of them married an Inonda woman and his children have acquired some rights from their father and some from their mother. The other man married a woman from the neighbouring Urio village. He has no children and lives with his only adopted daughter's family. He is old and senile and cannot leave the house. When all the lands of the village had been covered by our survey, none had been mentioned as belonging to him. When the matter was queried it was explained that technically he had rights in the lands of his lineage of adoption, but that as an aged dependant without issue, these rights would lapse on his death. In practice they had already lapsed.

[848] Two illegitimate children have been adopted by the father of their respective mothers (who were sisters). They will acquire land rights from him in the same way as if they were his own children. (His only born son is at present teaching in New Britain). In one case, however, the mother's present husband has also offered to make land available to the boy when he grows up. In the early stages at least he would acquire only permissive rights to this land.

In the event of the death of a local man who has young children, the children will need adoption in so far as foster care is concerned, but not necessarily in so far as land rights are concerned. A current example is that of the death of the only resident adult member of the Oiwa'undi lineage. A man of Jegotumo lineage took in the deceased's wife and "adopted" his children, but it is understood that they will inherit their land rights from their father, though in the event of need they could get land from their adoptive father. The adoptive father at present acts as 'trustee' for their lands.

A marginal case is that of a young unmarried man of a distant tribe whose mother recently remarried to an Inonda widower who has no children. The young man lives and plants with the couple. His mother's new husband speaks of him as his adopted son and says that if he remains in the village he will